

CARPENTER BOX

Carpenter Box's training partner **Alan Edwards** puts his faith in ACCA because of the strength and global recognition of the brand and the flexibility and breadth of its programme

Audit, tax and accountancy firm Carpenter Box, based in Worthing on the UK's south coast, has a training relationship with ACCA that goes back over 20 years. Training partner Alan Edwards himself completed the ACCA Qualification after joining the firm in 1993.

So why has the firm remained committed to ACCA as its preferred accountancy training body? 'ACCA has global status,' Edwards says. 'It has a worldwide brand.' Strong awareness of that brand means that talented individuals are attracted to it. 'Offering ACCA training helps us to recruit high-quality candidates,' Edwards says.

Some 15 individuals in the firm, which has 10 partners and around 90 staff, are currently working their way through their ACCA studies. 'ACCA is a proactive association and very supportive of us as an employer and of our trainees, which is key,' Edwards notes.

Carpenter Box has Platinum employer status – the highest level of accreditation awarded by ACCA to training employers and an indication of exceptional commitment to staff development.

'We receive a great deal of support from ACCA,' Edwards says. 'We have an individual contact, who comes to see us two or three times a year. ACCA also provides numerous tools in terms of marketing information and its websites. We get a lot of help too if there are necessary changes in syllabus from time to time. We receive good advice that we can filter down to our staff.'

The students benefit from extensive ACCA support, including online tools to help with studies and professional development



plans. 'Students also find the flexibility and breadth of the syllabus very appetising,' Edwards says. 'There are lots of areas they can specialise in. The professional papers are structured in a way that fits their career paths.'

This flexibility suits the firm as well, as it has gradually shifted towards greater specialism in its own structure. 'Depending how individuals develop in the workplace, they can pick the professional exams to fit where they want to go,' Edwards says.

'The ACCA Qualification meets the needs of accounting practices very well in that sense.'

So what advice would Edwards give an employer contemplating training ACCA students?

'I would encourage them to contact the association and find out about the employer accreditation programme,' he says. 'There is a wealth of experience in ACCA. The staff are happy to work with employers to help them train ACCAs and then to improve the standard of the support they give.'